MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET
A Museum Of County Life

# IMPRESSIONS

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER • NOVEMBER 2001

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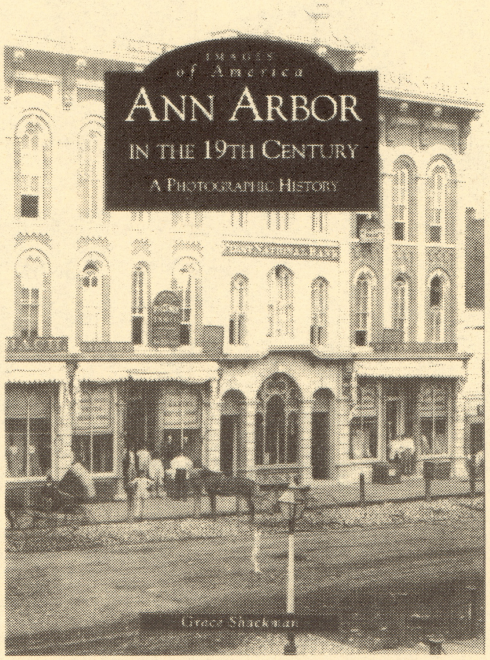
Annual dues are individual, $15; couple/family $25; student or senior (60+) $10; senior couple $19; business/association $50; patron $100.

## Museum Shop Has Lots Of Goodies

Looking for a gift with a historical twist? We have many items in our Museum Shop that might be perfect for that certain someone. We have Xmas bells hand painted by **Harriet Birch** ($5), crocheted snowflakes ($1), doll kits ($10), dolls ($25) and bears ($4). We also have many books on hand including **Louis Doll's** book on Frank Glazier of Chelsea ($25); **Russell Bidlack's** book on Ann Allen ($7.50); **Reade and Wineberg's** book on Historic Buildings of Ann Arbor ($15); **Wystan Stevens'** book on Northfield ($25); a repro of the **1896 Ann Arbor Headlight** ($5); **160 Years of the Ann Arbor News** ($10); and several books on **historic gardening.** We also have mounted **1880 Birds Eye Maps** of Ann Arbor ($15) and rolled ones in a tube ($10); **Grace Shackman's** new book of photos of 19th century Ann Arbor ($20), several copies of out-of-print photo books on Chelsea and Manchester, and much more! **Note cards, games and children's toys** are also on hand. Come down and see us the first two weekends in December when we will be having our **Christmas Open House.** For more information **call 734-662-9092.**




**Grace Shackman's new book is now available with many previously unpublished photos of Ann Arbor. Cost is $20.**

## New Exhibit Debuts This Month

**Judy Chrisman** has once again outdone herself in setting up an exciting seasonal exhibit using many of our newest artifacts from the **Bach Bequest**. Entitled "***Christmas Shopping Around 1900,"*** it uses our vast collections of artifacts to illustrate gifts that were given in the past. After-Christmas sales were already a familiar offering in 1918. We will have the actual gifts as well as the gift packaging from many familiar stores such as Wagner's and Goodyear's. Old newspaper ads for Christmas gifts will also be prominently displayed. Come down and see us the **first two weekends in December** when we will be having our Open Houses. Thanks to all who helped with the set up including **Louisa Pieper, Pauline Walters, Patty Creal, Ann DeFreytas, Arlene Schmid Sue Kosky** and **Susan Wineberg.** The exhibit will be up from **November 7-January 6.** We are open Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays from noon-4 PM and by appointment.

## February Program

Mark your calendars now for **Sunday, February 17th** when **Jim Mays** will be speaking on "***The Story of the Buffalo Soldiers."***

BY WARREN HALE • MILAN AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# The Story Of Milan And The Hack House

Photo by Susan Wineberg

Hack House (1888, 1895) in Milan, Mich.

*On a rainy, cloudy Sunday (which improved later) a group of 25 people attended a talk by* ***Warren Hale*** *at the newly restored* ***Historic Hack House Museum in Milan****. The Hack House was dedicated Sunday, October 7, after a $48,000 restoration was completed. Hale, the former Chief of Police and one of the founders of the* ***Milan Area Historical Society,*** *talked about the history of the town, the formation of the historical society and the rescue of the house from demolition and neglect. Hale has written a column on a topic of historical interest (known as "Way Back When") for the* ***Milan Leader*** *for over 20 years. In 1991, some were collected and published and are available for $10.00. The WCHS will be selling them in their gift shop at Christmas. Hale later gave tours of the house along with* ***Bonnie Jurgensen,*** *President of the Historical Society, and* ***Laura Henderson*** *who wrote the CLG preservation grant and oversaw the restoration. You can join the Milan Historical Society by sending $10/individual or $20/family to the society at 61 W. Second St., Milan, MI 48160.*

Warren began his talk by telling us that he never knows what he is going to say. He can do this because he is an extremely engaging speaker and had us on the edge of our seats as he told us the story of Milan, a story that has fascinated him since he was a boy. "I've been accused of being the 'local historian' for 30 years, and the reason is that nobody else does it. I've written an article for our newspaper, the ***Milan Leader,*** for 25 years, every week (I can't believe I've done that since it limits my time every week). And since the Heritage Newspaper chain purchased the ***Milan Leader***, and we became part of the ***Milan News***, our competitor, now called the ***Milan News-Leader***, they decided to pay me by the column inch. My brother noticed immediately that my columns had gotten longer! There is not a day in my life I don't study Milan history. It fascinates me and I love to do it. I like to read old newspapers from the 19th century because I've researched it so many times, I know every person I read about.

"Our society was founded in 1972 by myself and Jim Burger, out of necessity. The City of Milan Council and Mayor were in a real extravagant scrap mode at that time. Everything that wasn't used or was old, they wanted to dump and get rid of. They got rid of some stuff I wasn't too happy about, but there was nothing I could do about it. Then they were going to scrap or sell our **Henry Ford Fire Truck**. I thought this was a valuable piece of Milan history. Ford came to Milan briefly and argued with the Milan Council for two years to get our 1926 Model T for Greenfield Village. The City wouldn't give it up since they wouldn't have a truck if they sold it to him. Ford offered to give them a 1938 Ford Truck chassis and have an American LaFrance body put on it. The Council finally said 'great' and the switch was made. We got the new truck and he got the old truck.

"When the 1938 truck became outmoded and outdated, they were going to sell it. I was Chief of Police at the time, and I went to a council meeting, and I said 'you can't do that.' And they said 'oh yes we can.' I said 'give it to me, or sell it to me.' They responded 'no, we want to advertise it, we want to do it properly.' Then I turned to one of my patrolmen, Jim Burger, and said 'doesn't you wife work for an attorney in Ann Arbor? How about if we start a historical society in Milan?' His wife contacted her boss the next day and he helped us for nothing. We chartered the Milan Area Historical Society in February 1972. A month later I took the charter to the Council—they squirmed a little bit 'cuz I had my foot on their neck—and they gave us the Henry Ford Truck. And because I wined and dined the warden at the prison, he offered to have the prisoners work on the truck for us for the cost of the materials, about $220. They took it down to the frame and rebuilt it in their wonderful auto shop. Now it is fantastic and we've preserved a piece of Milan history.

"So, that started our society. From then on, we have been very fortunate. We acquired this house, we got the Fire Barn downtown, we've got a ton of artifacts (we just got an Ann Arbor Organ Company Organ—doesn't work but we don't care). We have made tremendous strides in our 30 years of existence.

"I've had two requests for today. One is

how did Milan get its name. Well, it's not very exciting. I've had people tell me they know for sure. I had one lady who was so determined and so insistent who said 'I bet you don't know how Milan got its name,' totally ignoring the fact that I'd been studying Milan history for over 20 years. She said 'Milan was named after Henry Tolan and Frank Miller—'Mil' for Miller and 'an' for last letters of Tolan. I says, 'gosh, I didn't know that.' Actually, Milan was named for Milan Township. Milan is bisected by two counties and four townships: Washtenaw and Monroe Counties, and Augusta, London, Milan, and York Townships.

"When Milan was first founded in 1830 by John Marvin, who built a log house on what is now West Main St. ("I'm going to give you 130 years of Milan history in 10 minutes!"), he built his store where the Tamiami Indian Trail and Potawatomi Indian Trail crossed. The Tamiami Trail is now Plank Road out of Monroe and the Potawatomi Trail ran from Toledo up the old route of US-23 to the Straits of Mackinac. After he came, and as was the case most of the time, he was followed by family and friends. That only stands to reason. I'm not going to write to an enemy and tell him to come and join me in the wilderness! John encouraged his brother-in-law Henry Tolan to come. Their names live on in our streets (Marvin, Tolan). After John, two farmers came to town but they weren't part of the 'downtown.' One was Bethuel (pronounced Beth-ool) Hack and the other was Harmon Allen. Bethuel was the forerunner of the Hacks who bought this house and Allen was the man who gave his name to Allen Road. They both had huge, adjoining farms. These three men were the nucleus of what would later become Milan. All three were from New York State.

"Milan didn't have a name until 1836. However, there was mail delivery of course. But since there were no names, people called it whatever they wanted and added 'Michigan Territory.' The first postmaster, who was Bethuel Hack, thought we should have a name for mail delivery purposes, so he named it 'Farmersville' because everyone was a farmer. Milan was Farmersville for only a year. Henry Tolan had a drugstore on the corner, 9x12, and grew his own herbs in a garden in the back and ground them and sold them for medicine. He wanted to be postmaster and got it and put the post office right in his drugstore. He said 'as long as I'm in charge, we're going to call this town "Tolanville" and that worked for a while. Then came a third postmaster just one year later (we changed fast in those days) named David A. Woodard, a mill owner, and he changed the name to Woodard Mills.

"The people who lived in Milan Township started encroaching on what was starting to become a settlement and they were telling people to address their mail to Milan Township. Over the years, the township distinction got dropped and the village just became Milan. The reason it became Milan in 1836 is because the Postmaster General of the U.S. said 'I'm sick to death of all these names—we've got mail going to four different towns and they are all the same place! Now either you folks decide on a name or by God I will. And they refused to decide on a name. So, he said 'henceforth, you shall be called Milan because Milan Township gets the bulk of your mail.' But even as late as the Civil War, mail was still coming to Tolanville and Farmersville and Woodard Mills.

"Milan Township is named for Milan, Italy. Back in those days, the primary settlers in the township were French. And, of course, the French are famous for their grape growing. Because of the grapes, it attracted Italians. They used to have parcels of land called 'shotgun land' (long narrow fields) and they grew just about nothing but grapes. We have a town out here called 'Grape.' Also, there is the Raisin River, named for the wild grapes growing on its banks. I guess the Italians overrode the Frenchmen in the township and named the township after Milan, Italy. *[Editor's Note: there is a historical museum located in historic Milan, Ohio, which is two miles south at Exit 7 off the Ohio Turnpike. It was founded in 1817 on the spot of an Indian village. In 1824 it boasted 24 houses and because of a canal to Lake Erie it became the second largest inland grain-shipping center in the world in 1800].*

**Photo by Susan Wineberg**
**WCHS members tour the Hack House.**

"One other story I have to tell because it's my favorite. We had a bartender downtown with two bars. One in Milan and one in Mooreville. He name was Nase, pronounced Nancy but spelled N-a-s-e. I can't visualize a saloon owner with the name Nancy. By God, he got back at his parents. He named his daughter Clyde! This was so strange—a guy named Nancy and a gal named Clyde.

"Now, let's discuss the Hack House. It was the third and final residence of the Hack family who were descendants of Bethuel Hack, our second founder. I know how his first name was pronounced because I was talking to his grandson, Jim, one night, and Jim set me straight when I pronounced it wrong. Jim was as deaf as a stone, and couldn't hear unless I yelled in his ear. He wouldn't use a hearing aid or a hearing horn. He growled 'it's not Beth-yu-el, it's Beth-ool!' Bethuel Hack had two children, Nothan and William Henry Harrison Hack. The former became a banker, the latter a farmer like his dad. He eventually bought this house in 1895.

Olive Friend built the house in 1888 as a result of money gained by the fact of her husband being a confidence man and a swindler! This is the Electric Sugar Refining Co. scandal. Her husband claimed to have invented a machine that would take sugar beets in the top and spew out refined sugar at the bottom. Electricity had just come into being and people were easily conned by this smooth character, who flicked

switches and turned knobs while lights flashed on and off and made noises. He'd go to the machine and say 'voila' here is the refined sugar.

"It was all a hoax but they made millions until they got caught after four years. Before that he'd pulled this racket all over the U.S. and even in London, England where he got investors. He was tried and imprisoned in Sing Sing where he died. His name was Prof. Henry Friend and he had an accomplice named William E. Howard. His wife, Olive Friend, came to Milan where she had relatives and there's no doubt where she got the money to build this grand house. She didn't do it on cookie or bread money. She did that on one hell of an inheritance. They had tried to convict her, but it didn't work. She was in court twice and won both times due to lack of evidence.

"She built this beautiful house but didn't believe in paying taxes. She had more important things to do with her money. After 8 years, the township sold the house in a tax sale to William Henry Harrison Hack. Although he was her nephew, he threw Olive out! She went to Canada and was never heard from again.

Hack farmed 460 acres and added on other parts of the house, such as the dining room, which was doubled in size due to his love of entertaining. He only had two children, Jim and Nina (pronounced nine-ah), and Jim stayed and worked the farm, and as the years wore on, the acreage declined to 40 acres across the road and 20 acres here. Jim and his wife Daisy sold part of it to Owens-Illinois for their box plant. The rest of it was sold to Emmet Schultz who made modular homes. When they went out of business, they sold what was left to Ford Motor Co. I don't know if you realize it, but across the road—and it's been proven—is the largest plastics plant in the world— not the US but the world. This is where Milan gets its money. We've always been lucky that way.

"Anyway, Owens-Illinois gave Jim and Daisy a life lease and said they would get the house when they moved or died. Jim lived to be 98 and Daisy lived to be 104. I was closely associated with the family since I was 10 years old, when I'd mow the lawn here with a hand mower (what a job!). After they moved to a nursing home in 1974, of course, they defaulted on the lease. I got a phone call, before the

Photo by Susan Wineberg

**Laura Henderson, Warren Hale and Bonnie Jurgensen of the Milan Area Historical Society**

historical society was started, telling me they were going to demolish the Hack House. I started asking around but couldn't find out anything. Then when we got our historical society established, I was called by the Mayor of Milan who asked me what I wanted to do with the Hack House, since Owens-Illinois wanted it moved or torn down. I said 'you can't do

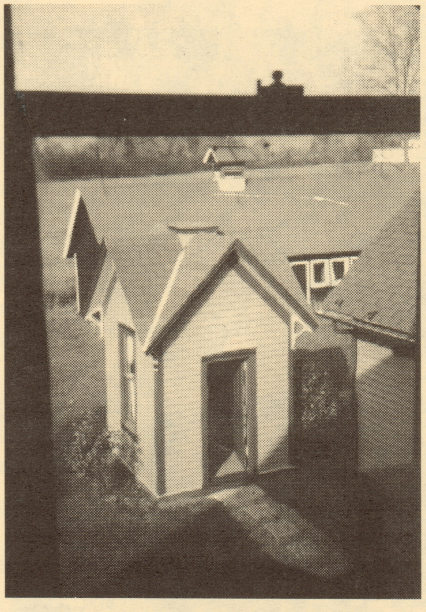


Photo by Susan Wineberg

**"The classiest outhouse in the U.S." behind the Hack House in Milan.**

that' and they finally agreed to sell us the house for $1.00 in 1980.

"After Jim and Daisy moved out, shirttail relatives came out of the woodwork and picked the house clean of all its artifacts. A family in Ypsilanti (related to Daisy) came and took everything. It was such a shame, since they had some of Bethuel's furniture. The last thing they tried to get was their bed, after we owned the house. I found a guy trying to load a walnut headboard into the truck, and the guy had the nerve to ask me to help him! I had on my uniform and ordered him to put it all back in the house or he'd be a guest at Harvey's Hotel (the jail). Today, that is the only original piece of furniture left in the house. We've since received a few items back such as some framed pictures, but mostly we've had to make do with other things. Some are on loan from us (two cradles and a rocking chair for a child are from WCHS). We have been writing to a guy in Oklahoma who has the rest of the bedroom suite, and he is asking us to give him the bed! I told him he'd better stop writing us, he was getting to me. Anyway, that's the story of this house."

In the question and answer period, we learned that Hale rejected fixing tickets for an Owens-Illinois employee who thought that this could be traded for not demolishing the house. Hale told this story in his funny joking manner, indicating he could take the check and escort him to court at the same time! "I told him I wouldn't fix a ticket for my mother. You don't do that." He still had to argue for eight years with the company and even after they got the house they had to argue about the amount of land because the parcel was too small to keep the outhouse, buggy barn, and chicken coop in their original locations. "We had to argue with them about that and they gave us another acre. Now we have 2.3 acres and the classiest outhouse in the United States (a three-holer)." The Society also has Olive Friend's Exotic Bird Sanctuary, some of which can be seen in the painting on the ceiling in the old kitchen, done by an itinerant painter. A tornado destroyed the old Big Barn in 1965. The old granary was also demolished but the foundations are still visible. The milk house just rotted away.

Hale's suggestion they put the railroad siding beside the house is what saved the

house from being moved. Ford Motor Co needed a rail siding and this was the reason they wanted to move the house. Now the railroad siding goes right by and does shake the house. So far, no damage has been noticed. "We wouldn't have wanted it if it hadn't been left here. It wouldn't have made any sense."

One of the biggest boosts to the Milan economy was the arrival of the railroads. The Ann Arbor came in 1878 and the Wabash came in 1880. Trains came by on the Wabash on an ordinance-controlled speed limit of 72 mph. This was the famous Wabash Cannonball. Hale talked about one of his jobs as a teenager when he had to get the mail off the train, which was a challenge when it didn't stop! They used a 'Mae West' mailbag and it was quite an exchange of mail.

Photo by Susan Wineberg
**1930s kitchen in the Hack House.**

Other famous Milan institutions are the federal prison built in 1931 (which is why Warren's dad came to Milan) and the Ford Plastics Plant which dates to 1985. Other pertinent facts are that Milan's population is 4400 and was 4100 twenty years ago. But times they are 'a changin' and Milan is currently building a $53 million high school (he called it a Taj Mahal) which could take care of Ann Arbor. This school is in Monroe County, while the old school is in Washtenaw. Hale went on to describe many of the problems which result from the town being split in half and divided between two counties. One amusing story was about how he would wait to arrest someone in Monroe County if he wanted them to be jailed because Monroe had a 'hangin' judge who even fined people who didn't stand at attention. If Warren liked you, you were arrested in Washtenaw County.

Warren then introduced **Bonnie Jurgensen,** the President of the Milan Area Historical Society, and **Laura Henderson** who wrote the CLG Grant for the restoration of the Hack House. Laura, a graduate of the Historic Preservation Program at EMU, directed the restoration and found the original colors. They explained that they are trying to be open once a week from May-November. This year they experimented with Fridays from 1-4 PM and it has worked pretty well. In December they hold their open house and Christmas party, after which they close for the season.

The Hack House, which is now owned by the City of Milan, is available for weddings and meetings by other organizations. At first, Milan was unwilling to use taxpayer money, but after meeting with Louisa Pieper and Hugh Gurney, they were convinced that preservation would be good for the city and that it could generate funds for many historic projects. Then Laura wrote the CLG Grant and received a $28,000 grant that was matched in the federal 60/40 program.

The next project of the Society is the restoration of the **Old Fire Barn** that was acquired by the Society in 1983. Eventually it will be the home of the Milan Chamber of Commerce and the DDA. With the help of EMU's Preservation Program, downtown Milan became a historic district about five years ago. The Historic Commission has encouraged them to restore this deteriorating structure and there was enough community interest to establish another committee in 1995. Grant money has not been forthcoming, however, and the monies collected so far have been through fundraisers. Right now, bricks are being sold for $75, $250, or $1,000 to raise money for this restoration.

The tour was exciting and interesting, since the house served as the home of two interesting families (Olive Friend and the Hacks) contains many faux wood and marble finishes, and even sports a painted ceiling done by an itinerant painter! The tour guides are so enthusiastic that I encourage all of you to take a drive to Milan (Saline-Milan Road is quite a lovely country road) and experience this house for yourself —in the spring! The Milan Area Historic Society can be reached through Bonnie at 61 W. Second, Milan, 48160. Their phone number is **734-439-7522.**

# Your Museum

Eight men from the **Phi Alpha Kappa** fraternity spent one Saturday helping us get the house cleaned up and ready for winter. Some helped with leaf raking and garden cleanup, while others worked in the basement to clean the walls and apply waterproof paint. The upper back rooms were cleaned and vacuumed and shelves were installed in the 'library.' Thanks go to **Louisa Pieper** for finding these men, and to **Pat Thompson, Dick Galant and Pauline Walters** who supervised and worked too.

Special thanks are also due to two new volunteers, **Ruth Reynolds** and **Joanne Lorey** —the "doctors of mailing"—who labeled the ***Impressions*** for us this month in record time. Thank you!

**Pat Thompson** and **Sue Kosky** have been busy in the garden. They removed three huge viburnum along the Beakes drive side, which will be replaced with currants and gooseberries. They have started the stone wall which will be completed after the sump work is done by Tilton Associates. We will see the results of their hard work in the spring when our garden again will be in bloom.


## Business Support

**This month's issue of *Impressions* is co-sponsored by**

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# Around The Town

**Cobblestone Farm** will be celebrating its **Country Christmas** on **Sunday, December 2** from 1-5 PM. The house will be decorated for the season, and they will have a bag piper. There will also be readings from ***A Christmas Carol***, wood stove cooking and crafts for children. A **wood stove cooking workshop** will be held on **Saturday, December 8** from 11-1:30. Come one, come all! Also mark your calendar for **A Winter Evening, Friday, February 8. The Family Dance Series** is held on **Sundays from** 2-4:30 **on 11/18, 12/16/, 1/20/, 2/17 and 3/17.** The farm is at 2781 Packard Road, near Buhr Park, and can be reached at **734-994-2928.** It is owned and operated by the Parks Department of the City of Ann Arbor. The cobblestone portion dates to 1840 and the rear portion is even older, dating to the 1820s when the area was just being settled. The ***Cobblestone Farm News*** is published by the Cobblestone Farm Association that is committed to the restoration of the Farm. To join, contact them at their address.

The **Detroit Observatory** continues its lecture series in November and December and has also announced its schedule for next year. **Edward Voss**, Professor Emeritus of Botany, will speak on **Tuesday, November 13** at 7 PM on ***"19th Century Plant Collectors in Michigan: Physicians as Botanists."*** Before modern pharmacy, physicians were trained in botany and spent time collecting and studying plants. Numerous physicians in the early 19th century made contributions to knowledge of the Michigan flora, including Zina Pitcher, Asa Gray, Abram Sager, and Douglass Houghton. This promises to be a fascinating talk.

On **Tuesday, December 4, Jan Longone,** Adjunct Assistant Curator at the Clements Library, will speak on ***"Dr. Chase and His Famous 19th C. Recipe Book."*** Dr. Chase's printing house still stands at the NW corner of Main and Miller and Longone is always a joy to hear. She will mention toad ointment and 19th century stucco in discussing Dr. Alvan W. Chase's 1856 'recipes.' Chase's early series of pamphlets on many topics eventually developed into a book that was an international best seller.

Next year, **William Farrand,** Professor Emeritus of Geology and Director Emeritus of the Exhibit Museum, will be discussing the ***"Geology of Ann Arbor and the Huron River Valley"*** on **Tuesday January 15** at 3 PM. He will be followed on **Tuesday, February 12**, at 3 PM by **Robert Grese,** Associate Professor of Natural Resources and Director of the Nichols Arboretum, on ***"The Shaping of the Nichols Arboretum."*** All lectures in the series are free but are limited to the first 40 who attend.

Open houses will be held on **Thursdays November 29** and **December 13** from 11-2. A $5.00 donation is suggested for the tours of this 1854 Observatory, the winner of many awards for its meticulous restoration. See original telescopes, artifacts and exhibits and pull the rope to rotate the dome just like a 19th century astronomer! They are located at 1398 E. Ann. Call **734-763-2230** or visit their website at **www.DetroitObservatory.umich.edu.**

The **Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County's** speaker on **Sunday, December 3**, will be **Marcia McCrary,** GSWC President and Director of the Antique Fire Equipment Preservation Group in Ypsilanti. She will be speaking on *"Holding Their Feet to the Fire: Information from Relatives"* at 1:30 PM in the auditorium of St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center.

Photo by Lars Bjorn

***Impressions*** **Editor Susan Wineberg holds award from the Historical Society of Michigan in company with other award winners.**

# Around The County

The **Dexter Area Historic Museum** Holiday Bazaar will be held **Monday, December 1** between 9 AM and 3 PM at the Museum. The Annual Christmas Tree Trim will be **Thursday November 15** and the Annual Christmas Sing will be Friday December 14 at 7:30 at the Museum. For more information call **734-426-2519** or visit their website at **dexmusesu@hvcn.org.**

The folks in Dexter are extremely elated that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners voted to designate **Gordon Hall** and all of its 67 acres as **a historic district.** We are extremely glad the BOC voted to protect the entire parcel, since it is one of the most beautiful Greek Revival homes on its original land in the entire state of Michigan. Many who spoke remarked that it is one of the finest in the country! Now the University of Michigan needs to be persuaded to sell to the Dexter Area Historic Society for a reasonable price. If you would like to voice your opinion to the Regents, you can e-mail them at **regents@umich.edu.** Or write to them at U-M Board of Regents, 2014 Fleming Bldg, Univ of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 48109-1340.

Speaking of historic districts, The Board of Commissioners also voted on October 24, 2001 to establish the **Milton** and **Kittie Geer Historic District,** covering the property in **Superior Township** at **8605 West Ann Arbor Road.** The owners, **Glenn** and **Jeani Miller**, are looking for historic photos of this house. If anyone can help, please contact them at **313-671-1170** or e-mail them at **gjmiller@adni.net.** Currently, one other district is under consideration. This is the **William** and **Jane McCormick** Home at **9105 West Ann Arbor Road,** also in Superior Township. The Final Report should be submitted within the next few months. Residents have been requesting **historic designation** to take advantage of the new **20% tax credits** (for state taxes) now available to homeowners.

The **Waterloo Farm Museum** hosts its last event of the year as a Victorian Christmas on **Saturday** and **Sunday December 1 and 2 from noon-5 PM**. The theme is "Herbs and Spices of Christmas Past" and the farmhouse will be decorated as it would have been in the 1880s. Music and wonderful smells will fill the air as

guests step back in time to see how a Michigan farm family celebrated this holiday. For more information call **734-426-9135.**

In **Saline**, the third lecture of the Fall Series will be by **Jim Cameron**, Saline High School history teacher and President of the Oral Historic Association of Michigan. He will be speaking on ***"Saline Valley Farms 1932-1953"*** on **Wednesday, November 14**, at 7:30 at the Depot. This might have been the first cooperative in Michigan. Many families lived on this farm during the Depression when resources were strained. The farm was not only self-sufficient, but produced an abundance of meat, vegetables and fruits that were sold. Cameron's project involved his high school students who collected oral histories of former residents many of whom still live in Michigan. The lecture is free and light refreshments are served.

Saline will be hosting its **Christmas celebration** on **Friday, December 7** from 5-8 PM at the Saline Depot. Come to the Depot and warm up before the **Saline Holiday Parade**! Call **734-769-2219** for more details. You can mark your calendar now for the **14th Annual Antique Show**, which will be held on **Friday, January 18, 2002** from 11-7 and **Saturday, January 19** from 9-5. Admission is $3 and lunch is available at this juried show.

**Chelsea** will be celebrating its **Festival of Lights** from **Thursday-Sunday, November 30-December 2.** This will include a tree lighting, visit from Santa, hayrides and other events. Call **734-475-1145** for more information. The **Chelsea Area Historical Society** and Museum is located at 125 Jackson Road in the old Depot. It is open on Saturdays from 1-3 PM, has railroad memorabilia, models and special displays. You can make special arrangements for your group by calling **734-475-9330**.

Have you been wondering what happened after we passed **Proposal B** last fall? This was to fund a **natural area preservation program**. Well, the wheels grind slowly, but they grind. The **WLT (Washtenaw Land Trust) Newsletter** reports that in June the Board of Commissioners made appointments to the Natural Area Technical Advisory Committee (NATAC). This committee is charged with overseeing and developing the program. Along with **Barry Lonik** filling the 'land trust/conservation' position, the committee members include **Sylvia Taylor** (wildlife mgt.), **Bill Browning** (environmental education), **Dave Lutton** (profession real estate), **Tony** Reznicek (botany/forestry), **Peter Pollack** (professional land use planning), and **Mike Wiley** (fisheries biology/aquatic ecology). The committee's first meeting was held September 13 and it will meet every two weeks throughout 2001. Money isn't available until 2002, so they plan to have applications ready next year. First, however, the committee must develop an evaluation process and criteria. The newsletter points out that this program is the **first of its kind in the Midwest.** Their goal is to have 5,000 acres of Washtenaw County's most diverse and beautiful landscapes protected forever. We wish them well.

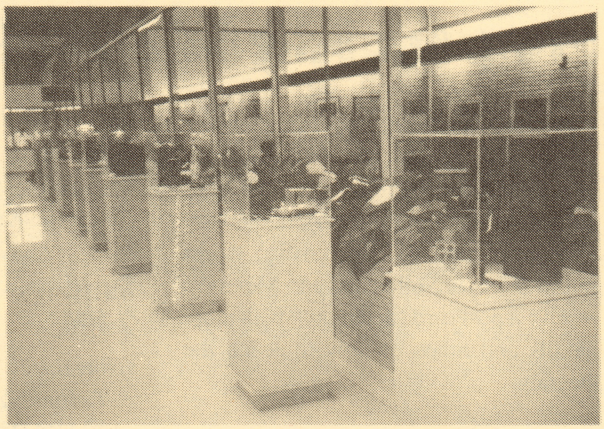


Photo by Lars Bjorn

**Our exhibits were on display at the UM Hospital-Taubman Medical Center in September.**

WLT also announced two more **Conservation Easements in Webster Township. Bill** and **Carol Kauffman** donated two easements covering 61 acres to the Trust. They hold of a variety of topography, flora and fauna that include fox, sandhill cranes, coyotes and other reptiles, mammals and amphibians. The parcel is in a rapidly developing, but still pristine area of Webster off Mast Road between Strawberry Lake Rd and North Territorial and borders Livingston County. The total number of acres now protected by WLT is over 1,000.

# Beyond Washtenaw

**Marla Overhiser** reports in the latest issue of **Preservation Wayne's** newsletter ***Preservation Works!*** that the **Farbman Group,** the people who restored the Wayne County Building, are now doing lofts on Woodward Avenue in Detroit. Vacant for over 15 years, the former **Parke-Davis** research facility has been converted into 48 condo units. Designed by **Albert Kahn** ca.1900, the lofts have wood floors, high ceilings (12-18'), and lots of spacious amenities. Prices range from $200-500,000+. You can call **313-393-9200** or visit **www.farbmanliving.com.**

The newsletter also reported on the rebirth of **East Jefferson Ave in Detroit.** The Jefferson-Chalmers Urban Renewal district unfortunately fostered an attitude of speculation for many years, resulting in large swaths of vacant land. However, this corridor represents one of the last collections of vintage deco structures in the city. Remaining business owners have formed the **Jefferson East Business Association (JEBA)** which will host a Developer's **Open House and Tour** on **May 1, 2002.** To get on the mailing list, call **313-331-7939.**

The **Canton Historical Society** recently celebrated the restoration of the **Sheldon School** Cupola and Bell on October 25. A ceremony with refreshments was held. They can be contacted at **734-981-1475.**

A new book on **Northville** has just been published. ***Northville, Michigan*** by **Barbara G. Louie,** part of the "Making of America" series from Arcadia Books, recalls stories about Henry Ford, aviation pioneer Eddie Stinson, and Wayne County Road Commissioner Edward Hines. Louie is a newspaper columnist and local historian and the book uses over 120 images. It is priced at $25 and can be obtained at the Mill Race Museum. Call **248-348-1845** for more information.

Want to know more about cultural institutions across Michigan? The state now has an official travel website, **www.michigan.org,** which includes 234 entries under "cultural tourism." According to **Steve Hamp**, President of **Henry Ford Museum**, over 55 million people now make travel plans using the Internet. Michigan's Museums are working together to promote each other and heritage tourism in Michigan.

# Program Schedule 2001-2002

Louisa Pieper wants to 'get out into the county' and we hope you will enjoy our lectures. All programs are on the third Sunday of the month, from 2-4, and are free and open to the public. Light refreshments are often served. Members receive a post card each month with more details and maps of how to reach the meetings.

## Sunday • November 18, 2001 2 PM

**Cynthia Furlong Reynolds** will discuss **"A History of Chelsea from Residents' Memories."** It will be held at the Chelsea Retirement Community Center.

## Sunday • February 17, 2002 2 PM

In honor of **Black History Month**, we will have **Jim Mays** speaking on **"The Story of the Buffalo Soldiers."** He will discuss the history of this group and the organization that exists today to perpetuate the memory of this valiant group of long forgotten soldiers.

## Sunday • March 24, 2002 2 PM

***(Note this is NOT the third Sunday)***

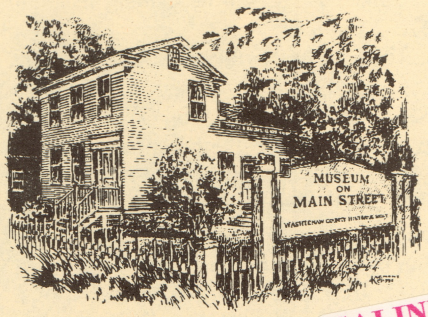
**Tammy Szatkowski** will give us a tour of the **UM Dental [Gordon H. Sindecuse] Museum**, a fascinating and overlooked museum in the heart of the U-M Campus. See collections of old toothpaste tins, tooth brushes, false teeth and dentists' offices, much from the collection of **Dr. Ron** and **Maggie Berris.**

## Sunday • April 21, 2002 2 PM

**Rachel Szymanski** will speak on **Katherine Dexter McCormick.** Rachel won a gold award for her project on the granddaughter of Samuel Dexter, founder of the Village of Dexter. She is an 11th grade student at Dexter High School and a Girl Scout. Katherine McCormick was active in the women's suffrage movement and an early supporter of the birth control movement led by Margaret Sanger. She also hired architect Prof. Emil Lorch to restore her grandfather's home, **Gordon Hall**, and later donated it to the University of Michigan. The University is planning to sell this historic estate and its surrounding acreage, and this has created some controversy since the Dexter Area Historical Society (DAHS) would very much like to purchase it to be their museum.

## Wednesday • May 15, 2002 6 PM

**Annual Meeting** and **Potluck** will be held in **Ypsilanti** at the **Ladies Literary Club.**




**WASHTENAW COU... HISTORICAL SOCIE...**
Post Office Box 3336
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-3...

**HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE**
*at Museum on Main Street*
Saturday, December 1 & 8 Noon – 4 PM
Sunday, December 2 & 9 Noon – 4 PM
**CHRISTMAS SHOPPING** *c. 1900*

**SALINE EXHIBIT** *at Museum on Main Street, Ann Arbor*
Jan 15 through Mar 31, 2002 / Wed, Sat, Sun: Noon – 4 PM

**SALINE OPEN HOUSE**: Sun. February 10, Noon–5 PM
*Visit with our Saline neighbors & share highlights of their history*
All welcome Refreshments And by appointment

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**"THE STORY OF THE BUFFALO SOLDIERS"**

**SPEAKER**
**JIM MAYS**

**SUNDAY • 2 PM**
**FEBRUARY 17, 2002**

**PLACE • TBA**

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NANCY KROHN
905 ROBIN RD
ANN ARBOR MI 48103-3008

Doll house made for **Patricia Hatch** whose family lived at the UM Stadium.

Étagère with items from the Bach bequest.

Wedding dress worn by **Anna Botsford**, 1876.

MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET
A Museum Of County Life

Ann Arbor, Michigan


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# WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Museum on Main Street • *A Museum of County Life***


500 North Main Street at Beakes & E. Kingsley Streets
**(734) 662-9092 • Email: WCHS MoMS@aol.com**
Post Office Box 3336
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-3336


December 2001

Dear Friends of the Washtenaw County Historical Society:

The Society is now in its third year of exhibiting in the **Museum on Main Street**. Exhibit subjects have been: *Women at Home, Delivery Days, Good Old Summertime* (featuring Junius Beal's 1890s tandem bicycle), *Memorabilia of the Women's Suffrage Movement*, and various holiday displays.

The Society has almost 500 members and many friends who choose to donate to the Museum Fund, which is used to finance activities beyond the General Fund that supports the Society. We are most grateful to all donors, and especially to those who contribute to the publication of our newsletter, *Impressions*, which is an award-winning publication.

This membership letter features the Bach family. Doris Anna Bach, a Life Member, died in January 2001, and donated half of her estate, family furniture, and bric-a- brac to the Society. We already have many Bach family artifacts in our collection.

*Christmas Shopping, ca. 1900*, the exhibit for November and December 2001, includes several special items from the Bach collection. Other interesting Christmas gift items from long ago also are on display. Do plan to visit the **Museum on Main Street** soon to view these beautiful objects.

Our seven monthly programs this season feature other Washtenaw County historical societies: Saline, Milan, Chelsea, Dexter, and Ypsilanti. Additionally, the February 2002 meeting will feature, "The Story of the Buffalo Soldiers", and in March we will be able to visit the "University of Michigan Dental Museum."

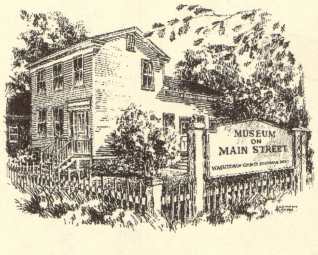
In the first quarter of 2002, the Saline Area Historical Society will bring artifacts from its collection to the **Museum on Main Street** to share highlights of Saline history. We look forward to working with other historical societies in the county in exhibiting their artifacts in our museum.

You are invited to join the Washtenaw County Historical or renew you present membership, to come and view our exhibits, and to share in the offerings of the **Museum on Main Street**. Exhibit hours are: Wednesday, Saturday & Sunday from Noon to 4 PM and by appointment.

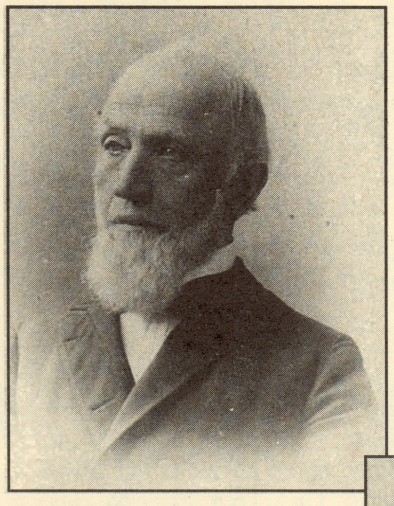
Sincerely,

Pauline V. Walters

Pauline V. Walters
*President*



# The Bach Family



**Philip Bach** • 1820 to 1895

Philip Bach was born in Germany in 1820. His family moved to Pennsylvania in 1829, and to a farm in Freedom Township in 1835. After working for various Ann Arbor merchants, in 1845, he became a junior partner in the dry goods store and manufacturer, C. B. Thompson and Co. This business eventually became P. Bach and Co., the finest dry goods business in the county. In 1867, Bach and several other investors built a large business block on the northwest corner of South Main and Washington Streets. Bach's dry goods store was on the corner, with a business college above and the First National Bank next door. Bach later sold his business to Bruno St. James who, in turn, sold it to his former bookkeeper, Bertha Muehlig.

**Anna Botsford Bach**
1839 to 1915

Active in local politics, Bach was Mayor of Ann Arbor in 1858. He was also elected trustee of the school district from 1856-1894 (Bach School is named for him), a director of the First National Bank of Ann Arbor from 1856-1895 and a director of the Forest Hill Cemetery Association

After being widowed twice, Bach married his third wife, Anna Botsford in 1876. Their large Greek Revival home was at 424 South Main Street. They had two children, Ellen and Waldo.

Anna Botsford Bach was very active in both civic and social circles. She was a member of the school board for nine years, and active in the Ladies Library Association, the YWCA, the Charitable Union and other organizations. She was one of the organizers of the Old Ladies Home Association, now called the Anna Botsford Bach Home.

**Waldo Botsford Bach**
1878 to 1918

Waldo Bach married Mabel Stacey in 1906. They had one child, Doris Anna Bach, born in 1907. Doris Bach was educated at the University of Michigan and moved to Kalamazoo where she taught biology until her retirement. She was a world traveler and photographer. She was a Life Member of our Society. She died in January 2001.

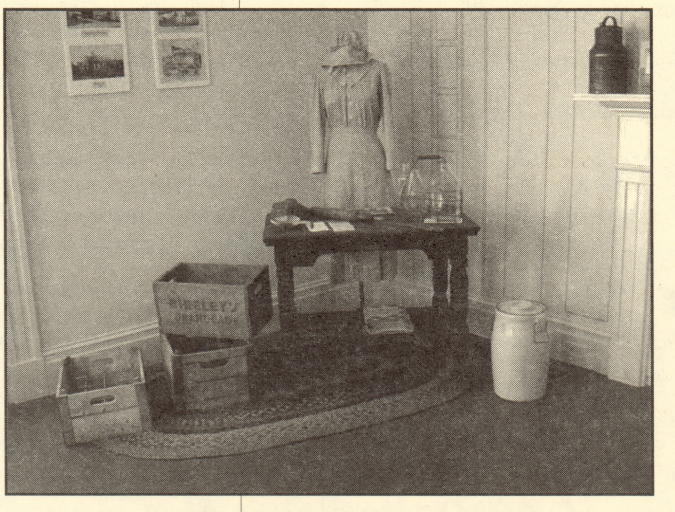
**Waldo & Ellen Bach**

**Doris Anna Bach** • 1907 to 2001

ANN ARBOR NEWS • TUESDAY • AUGUST 14, 2001

# Museum Remembers 'Delivery Days'

"Delivery Days," a Washtenaw County Historical Society exhibit at The Museum on Main Street, recalls the ambiance of the days when milk, bread, ice and laundry deliveries were as regular a part of life as stopping at the store is today.



The exhibit includes artifacts, photos and models from The West Side Dairy, such as horse-drawn milk wagons, original metal milk containers and old-fashioned gooseneck bottles. The well-known dairy was an outgrowth of Wurster's Dairy located on the corner of Catherine and North Fifth Avenue around 1900. The display case in the Towsley Room contains nearly a dozen scale models of trucks of various Ann Arbor businesses created by Ray Helber. According to historian Pauline Walters, a dozen creameries delivered fresh milk in Ann Arbor around the turn of the century.

There are old photos of the ice house off the Huron River, on Argo Pond, where 200-pound block of ice were chiseled out of the river and stored year-round surrounded by sawdust and hay. It wasn't until the 1920s that artificial blocks of ice were delivered to iceboxes. The workers' tools—ice picks, tongs and cleats—are on display, too.

Photos and remnants reveal how groceries and huge bags of flour were delivered by horse and wagon. There are also 100-year-old advertisements touting home-delivered products from wood and ice to laundry and groceries. The exhibit [was] open until mid-October.

Located at 500 N. Main, the museum is open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from noon until 4 p.m. or by appointment. Admission is free; donations are appreciated. For information call 734-662-9092.

# Awards

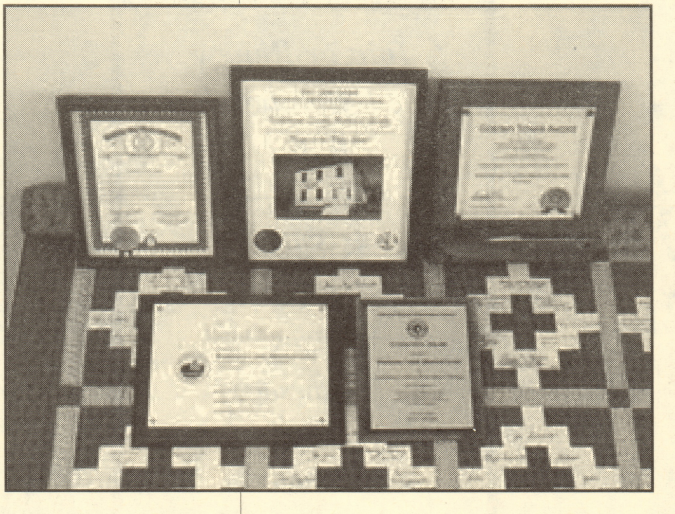
Certificate for Faithfully Respecting the Historic Qualities and Character of the Museum on Main Street from the **Ann Arbor** Historic District Commission • 1991

Golden Trowel from the City of Ann Arbor's Department of Parks & Recreation Awarded to Ella Grenier • 1996

Special Tribute to the Museum on Main Street from the Michigan Legislature • May 1999

Community Award for Contribution to Historic Preservation in Michigan & in Recognition of Restoration and Rehabilitation of the Kellogg-Warden House into the WCHS Museum **from Michigan Historical Preservation Network** April 2001

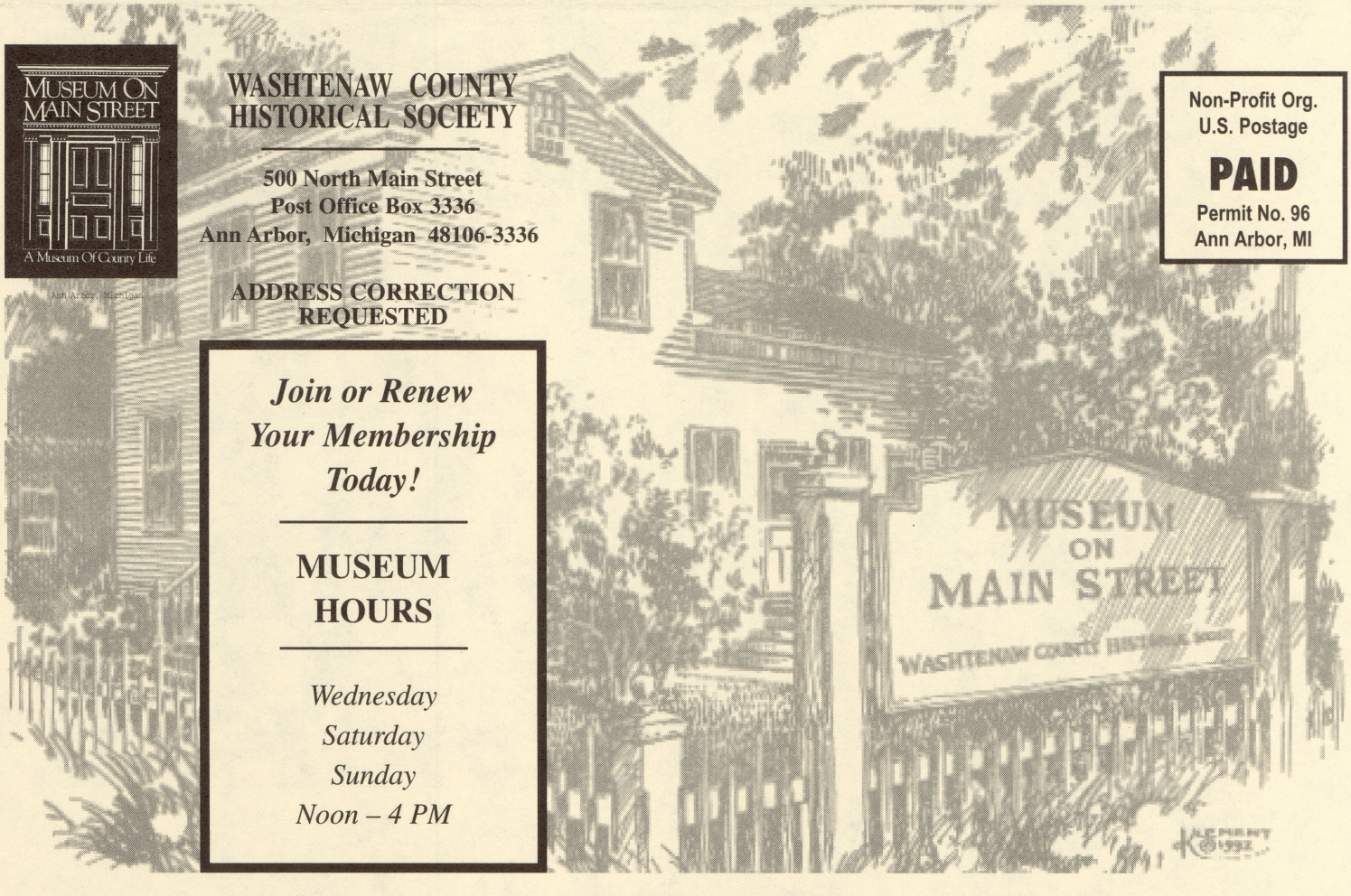
Award of Merit: Category: Newsletter • *Impressions* 2001 from the **Historical Society of Michigan**



# Calendar • 2001 - 2002

*Programs are held at 2 PM on the third Sunday of selected months – unless change noted.*
*The public is invited to attend all events.*

| | |
|---|---|
| September & October 2001 | Exhibit: Delivery Days. Museum on Main Street |
| Sunday • September 16 • 2 pm | Program: *The Story of Salt*. Rentschler Farm, Saline |
| Sunday • October 21 • 2 pm | Program: *Milan's Historic Hack House*, Hack House, Milan |
| Sunday • November 4 • 2 pm | Program: *Underground Railroad in Washtenaw County*. Greenhills School, Ann Arbor |
| November – January 6 | Exhibit: *Christmas Shopping, ca. 1900*. Museum on Main Street<br>Hours: Wednesday, Saturday & Sunday, Noon to 4 pm and by appointment |
| Sunday • November 18 • 2 pm | Program: *A History of Chelsea from Residents' Memories*. Chelsea Retirement Home Chapel |
| Saturday • December 1 & 8<br>Sunday • December 2 & 9 | Holiday Open Houses: Hours: Noon to 4 pm |
| **Mid-January to March 31, 2002** | Exhibit: *Artifacts from Saline Area Historical Society Collection*; Museum on Main Street |
| **Sunday • February 10 • Noon-5 pm** | Open House: *Hosted by the Saline Area Historical Society*. Museum on Main Street |
| **Sunday • February 17 • 2 pm** | Program: *The Story of the Buffalo Soldiers*. Location: Bethel AME Church, Ann Arbor |
| **Sunday • March 24 • 2 pm** | Program: Tour: *The Sindecuse Museum of Dentistry*. U of Michigan Dental School |
| **Sunday • April 21 • 2 pm** | Program: *Katherine Dexter McCormick*. Location: to be announced. |
| **Wednesday • May 15 • 6 pm** | WCHS Annual Meeting and Potluck Supper. Ypsilanti Ladies' Literary Club |

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**MUSEUM HOURS**

*Wednesday*
*Saturday*
*Sunday*
*Noon – 4 PM*